

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. – 15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) A method of providing prepaid local telephone services to a subscriber having a telecommunications device connected to a subscriber line and in communication with a telephone network via the subscriber line, the method comprising:

establishing a prepaid subscriber account on a prepaid local telephone service database, the prepaid subscriber account comprising subscriber identification information and a period of prepaid service;

monitoring the period of prepaid service for the prepaid subscriber account at the prepaid local telephone service database without monitoring a duration of individual prepaid telephone calls and without monitoring a dollar value of individual prepaid telephone calls;

sending a reminder message to the prepaid subscriber prior to an expiration of the period of prepaid service; and

sending a suspend message to the telephone network, the suspend message comprising an instruction to suspend local telephone service for the subscriber and to place the prepaid subscriber account on hold, wherein the prepaid subscriber account is maintained in an inactive state; and

monitoring a grace period at the prepaid local telephone service database, the grace period comprising a predetermined length of time measured from when the suspend message is sent, and sending a disconnect message to the local exchange carrier via telephone network after an expiration of the grace period if the subscriber has not renewed the subscriber account for an additional period of service, the disconnect message comprising an instruction to disconnect the subscriber account.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method of providing prepaid local telephone services to a subscriber having a telecommunications device connected to a subscriber line and in communication with a telephone network via the subscriber line, the method comprising:

establishing a prepaid subscriber account on a prepaid local telephone service database, the prepaid subscriber account comprising subscriber identification information and a period of prepaid service;

monitoring the period of prepaid service for the prepaid subscriber account at the prepaid local telephone service database without monitoring a duration of individual prepaid telephone calls and without monitoring a dollar value of individual prepaid telephone calls;

sending a reminder message to the prepaid subscriber prior to an expiration of the period of prepaid service;

sending a suspend message to the telephone network, the suspend message comprising an instruction to suspend local telephone service for the subscriber and to place the prepaid subscriber account on hold, wherein the prepaid subscriber account is maintained in an inactive state; and

~~The method of claim 16,~~ wherein the suspend message further comprises an instruction to permit telephone calls to an emergency telephone number, wherein the subscriber account is maintained in an inactive state and only permits the subscriber to make telephone calls to the emergency telephone number.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, further comprising monitoring a grace period at the prepaid local telephone service database, the grace period comprising a predetermined length of time measured from when the suspend message is sent, and sending a disconnect message to the telephone network after an expiration of the grace period if the subscriber has not renewed the subscriber account for an additional period of service, the disconnect message comprising an instruction to disconnect the subscriber account.